

FACT SHEET



10th Street Site Columbus, Nebraska

June 1998

SITE UPDATE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently completed additional groundwater sampling at the 10th Street site in Columbus, Nebraska. This effort involved the collection of groundwater samples from monitoring wells and the city's public water supply wells. These samples were taken quarterly from July 1997 to April 1998. The focus of the sampling was to determine the levels of contaminants in the groundwater in the vicinity of the city's public water supply wells near 10th Street. All information collected from the city's public water supply wells indicate that the city drinking water is safe for public use. However, samples collected from EPA's monitoring wells show increased levels of the volatile organic compounds, trichloroethylene (TCE) and perchloroethylene (PCE). In addition, arsenic was found in the monitoring wells at levels of concern.

SITE BACKGROUND

The 10th Street site is located in the south central portion of Columbus. Seven of the city's operating public water supply wells are located within the site in downtown Columbus.

In 1984, the Nebraska Department of Health (NDOH) detected the contaminants, TCE and PCE, in the city's public water supply wells during routine sampling. After additional sampling by EPA in 1987 and 1988, the site was proposed for listing on the EPA's National Priorities List (NPL). In 1990, the site was placed on the NPL to provide funding and assure that appropriate actions would be taken to identify sources of contamination and make decisions regarding site cleanup.

In 1995, EPA prepared a proposed plan that described the results of EPA's investigation, presented options to address the contamination, and recommended a course of action to take at the site. After receiving comments from the public on the proposed plan, EPA signed a Record of Decision (ROD), the document that explains the cleanup plan for the site. The ROD provided for additional monitoring of the groundwater at the 10th Street site and recommended that domestic use of the groundwater in this area be restricted.

PLANNING FOR FUTURE ACTIONS

On June 4, 1998, EPA and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) met with officials from the city of Columbus to discuss the recent groundwater monitoring well data and to answer questions about possible future courses of action. Although the sampling required by the ROD has been completed, the results of that sampling indicate that additional information is needed to better understand the extent of contamination and the threat it may present to the city's water supply. Consideration is being given to further examination of the areas where contamination has been found and is suspected to be present. EPA will conduct additional groundwater sampling at the site later this summer. EPA will continue to coordinate with NDEQ and the city of Columbus regarding these issues.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have questions or need further information, please contact:

Diane Huffman, Community Involvement Coordinator
EPA, Region 7
Office of External Programs
726 Minnesota Avenue
Kansas City, Kansas 66101
1-913-551-7003, Toll-free 1-800-223-0425
Fax: 913-551-7066
E-mail: huffman.diane@epamail.epa.gov